

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of the Claims:

1-37 (Canceled).

38. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
- collecting usage information from a smart appliance having a unique identifier at a central computer sharing a physical environment with the smart appliance;
- sending a periodic poll requesting information from the central computer to a remote database, the remote database being maintained and periodically updated by a seller of the smart appliance;
- receiving the requested information from the remote database at the central computer in response to the periodic poll, the information being related to the smart appliance having the unique identifier; and
- transmitting a control signal from the central computer to the smart appliance, the control signal being generated by the central computer based on

the information received from the remote database, wherein the control signal functionally operates the smart appliance.

39. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the seller of the smart device comprises one or more of a manufacturer of the smart device, a wholesaler of the smart device, and a retailer of the smart device.

40. (New) The method of claim 38, wherein the central computer polls the remote database using an Internet connection.

41. (New) A machine-readable medium storing a set of instructions that, when executed by a processor of a central computer cause the central computer to perform operations comprising:

collecting usage information from a smart appliance having a unique identifier at a central computer sharing a physical environment with the smart appliance;

sending a periodic poll requesting information from the central computer to a remote database, the remote database being maintained and periodically updated by a seller of the smart appliance;

receiving the requested information from the remote database at

the central computer in response to the periodic poll, the information being related to the smart appliance having the unique identifier; and transmitting a control signal from the central computer to the smart appliance, the control signal being generated by the central computer based on the information received from the remote database, wherein the control signal functionally operates the smart appliance.

42. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 41, wherein the seller of the smart device comprises one or more of a manufacturer of the smart device, a wholesaler of the smart device, and a retailer of the smart device.

43. (New) The machine-readable medium of claim 41, wherein the central computer polls the remote database using an Internet connection.

44. (New) A central computer system comprising:
a communications device to be coupled to a network to enable the central computer to communicate with a remote database and a smart appliance having a unique identifier;
a processor coupled to the communications device, the processor to:

collect usage information from a smart appliance;
send a periodic poll requesting information to a remote database,
the remote database being maintained and periodically updated by a
seller of the smart appliance;
receive the requested information from the remote database in
response to the periodic poll, the information being related to the smart
appliance having the unique identifier; and
transmit a control signal to the smart appliance, the control signal
being generated based on the information received from the remote
database, wherein the control signal functionally operates the smart
appliance.

45. (New) The central computer system of claim 44, wherein the seller of the smart device comprises one or more of a manufacturer of the smart device, a wholesaler of the smart device, and a retailer of the smart device.

46. (New) The central computer system of claim 44, wherein the communications device comprises a modem.